

INSURANCE COUNSELOR

Insurance Consumer Information Sheet

Insurance Policies and How To Claim What's Yours

If your house burns down, your car is wrecked, or your stereo is stolen, you may be able to make a claim against your insurance policy. There are rights available to you under Michigan's "Uniform Trade Practices Act."

YOUR INSURANCE COMPANY MUST DO THE FOLLOWING THINGS:

1. Tell you exactly what information it needs to handle your claim. The company must tell you this within 30 days after you have let the company know about your loss.
2. Tell you what coverages in your insurance policy apply to your claim.
3. Pay the part of your claim that is backed up by proof, and pay the rest when proper evidence is sent to them. A company can't hold back payment under one coverage so that you will settle with them on another part of the coverage.
4. Pay you within 60 days after you have given the company all the information it asked you for to back up your claim. If the company doesn't pay you within that time, it may have to start paying you 12 per cent simple interest on the amount it owes you.

5. Give you an explanation if your claim is denied, or partly denied, or if you are offered a compromise settlement.
6. Promptly answer any questions you have about your claim.

Along with your rights as an insurance policyholder, YOU HAVE SOME RESPONSIBILITIES TOO. They are:

1. Get in touch with your insurance company or agent right away when you have a claim.
2. Take reasonable actions to minimize the loss or damage, such as boarding up or covering a damaged window or roof or replacing a broken lock.
3. Give the company any reasonable information that it asks for as proof of your claim, and cooperate with the company as required by the policy.

IF YOU HAVE A QUESTION ABOUT YOUR CLAIM, first contact your agent or company. If they cannot answer your question, contact the Office of Financial and Insurance Services (OFIS) at the address shown below. OFIS is the state government agency that regulates insurance in Michigan.